

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK

This month, as part of our ongoing series on supposedly “feral” cats who turned out to be not-so-feral after all, we feature Cleopatra and Isosceles (below) and Charlie Bear (page 3).

Cleopatra and Isosceles

by Tracey Bell

In July 2009, six kittens showed up in my front flowerbed. I made a frantic call to the SPHS, who assured me that the mom cat would come back to them, gave me some advice about food, and told me about an organization called the Feline Friends Network that might be able to offer some help.

Sure enough, the mother cat did come back – very skinny, and very hungry. The kittens were socialized and eventually adopted through SPHS, but the mother cat was afraid of people and FFN told me that her chances of being adopted were not



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April adoptathons

Stratford-Perth Humane Society

Who needs a chocolate bunny for Easter when you can adopt a cat from the SPHS? A special price of only \$90 will be in effect from Saturday, April 4 to Monday, April 6.

Select an Easter egg at the time of adoption for a chance to win a FREE adoption! SPHS is located at 345 Douro Street. Hours are Saturday 12:00 to 4:00 pm, Sunday 12:00 to 3:00 pm, and Monday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

For more information call 519.273.6600.

Paws of Perth County

Saturday, April 25 | 10 am to 3 pm
Global Pet Foods (684 Ontario Street)

Adoption by donation (cash/cheque only)
Suggested: \$65 | includes vaccinations,
de-flea, de-worm, spay/neuter, microchip

For further info, contact Paws of Perth County
519.949.1695 | 519.272.0848 |
pawsofperthcounty@gmail.com

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Living up to her name, Cleopatra is a beauty

good. She needed someone to feed her and provide shelter. Most importantly she needed to be spayed so she wouldn't have another litter of kittens.

I was reluctant to take on another cat, but there didn't seem to be any other options for the mother cat, who I named Cleopatra. With the help of FFN I trapped her to be spayed – and officially became owned by her.

Shortly after Cleopatra was spayed, she disappeared for four days. When she returned she brought another cat with her. They clearly belonged together so we also trapped and spayed this girl and I called her Isosceles for the triangle shape on her face. Due to their estimated ages of three and one year, I believed that Isos was Cleopatra's daughter.

I developed a routine where I met Cleo and Isos in the garage twice a day, sitting with them while they ate, and then tossing them some treats and putting fresh catnip on their toys. Soon, I could pet them while they ate. They learned to make eye contact with humans and to “speak” when they wanted something.

After a year, I coaxed them into the basement, separate from my other cats, where we repeated the same routine. They usually ran back outside after eating but, if it was raining or cold, Cleopatra would sometimes stay in a little longer.

Over time, Cleopatra began to stay in the house more often and for longer periods of time. For the past two winters, Cleopatra has been a house cat. The transition has been harder for Isos, but she too spent most of this past winter in the house.

While I would like to keep them safe in the house full time, the warmer weather means they can't wait to be outside again. I am reassured by the fact that they are both “street smart” and I know that my neighbours are also watching out for their safety.

I consider myself lucky to have these two in my life. Cleopatra is very gentle, but she can be a fearless protector when required. Isos thinks she is still a kitten and her antics are fun to watch. Cleopatra loves to have her head scratched and Isos likes to be snuggled. They both have a lot of love to give.



Isos, looking for a cuddle

Most cats, when they are Out want to be In, and vice versa, and often simultaneously.

– Dr. Louis J. Camuti



The story of Charlie Bear

by Lynda Stringer

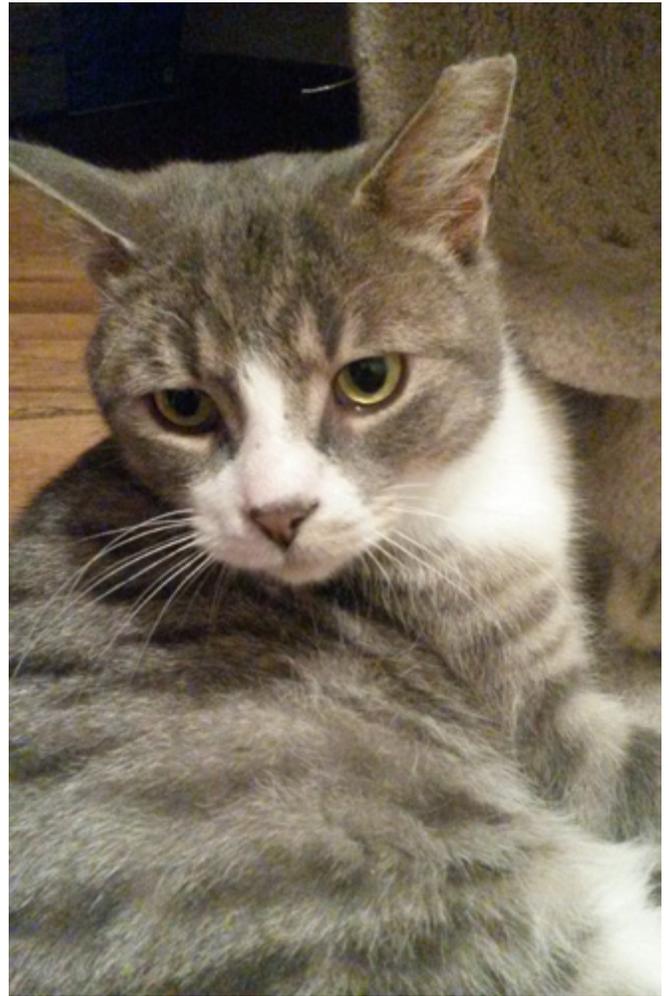
In the late spring of 2014, five cats appeared on my property and over time it became clear that none of them had homes. With the hope of catching them and taking them to the shelter, I began to feed them but soon realized that I was dealing with either feral or extremely frightened cats. This is when FFN came into my life.

In early October, I built a shelter for the five cats in my backyard. While a black-and-white cat visited from time to time, only a grey-and-white male – who I named Charlie Bear – made it his home. In the beginning, he would scramble up the fence and leave the moment I opened my gate to the backyard. But even if I didn't see him, I spoke to him every time I went out to leave food and fresh water and eventually Charlie stopped running away.

I still couldn't get close to him, however, although we managed to trap him in early November and he was TNR'd through FFN. By the time he was released back into my yard, he was very deep in my heart.

The first time I was able to touch was with wet food on my finger and him on the roof of my shed. Over the next few weeks, I was able to touch him more and more. Eventually, Charlie stopped leaving my backyard altogether and was always there waiting for me when I went out to care for him. Holding him became my favorite time of day and he would snuggle into me and purr. I did my best to warm him up but it broke my heart every time I had to leave him out in the cold. I sorely wanted to bring him inside.

In mid-January, Charlie began following me to my house when I visited him. After a couple of weeks of this, he did something completely unexpected – he rolled over and exposed his



Handsome boy Charlie Bear

belly to me. That freezing cold night, I saw him outside of my basement window. The next day he was in my spare room – and still is today.

Socializing Charlie into my family of pets has been a challenge but I will not give up on him – someone already did that. My Charlie Bear is sweet, loving and here to stay. He will never be tossed away again.

I have moved Charlie's shelter across the street to my neighbour's backyard and helped them set it up, because two of the cats that first showed up with Charlie have been spending time there.

In the near future, we hope to TNR them with the help of FFN.

IN THE MAY ISSUE OF CAT TALES ... Don't miss a report on FFN's "Low Cost for Low Income" program – helping cat owners in financial need be part of the solution!





In memorium

by Patricia Burnell

Immeasurable joy for 18 years
 Somewhat gentles away the tears
 We shed
 The day
 You went on your way.
 The energy shifts and circles the space
 No longer your place
 But will never erase your soft furry face from
 our eyes
 As we wish you goodbye
 Our Lily.

A HEARTFELT THANK-YOU

To our two local Pet Valu stores who are holding their annual "PAWS" event throughout the month of April. Shoppers can donate the amount of their choice for paper PAWS which will then line the Pet Valu windows. There will be a canned food and litter drive as well, with all proceeds going to Feline Friends!!! Are we lucky, or what? Please stop in during April and support us ... All donations go directly to support our many programs.

Get silly with us!

FELINE FILM FESTIVAL | FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2015 |
 KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | 7PM

You need to put a big red circle around Friday, June 5 in your calendar now. Right now. No, don't wait! If you wait, you might forget, and if you forget, you might miss the fun and frivolity that is our 3rd annual Feline Film Festival! There will be an hour-long screening of the finest short cat videos. There will also be nibbles, wine, beer, a fab silent auction, Pat's Puddy Products, tarot card readings, and our Best of Stratford raffle. It's a hoot, and we want you there. All for the low cost of \$15/adult or \$7.50/child (one free beverage included in the price of admission). Proceeds help to fund Feline Friends Network programs to humanely reduce cat overpopulation and homelessness in Stratford and Perth.

And there is still time to submit the cat videos that you love. Please keep them coming! Post them to our Facebook Events Page or, if you're not on Facebook, you can submit videos by emailing links to films@felinefriends.ca.



Cat lovers can readily be identified. Their clothes always look old and well used. Their sheets look like bath towels and their bath towels look like a collection of knitting mistakes. – Eric Gurney



A few urgent appeals ...

DONATIONS FOR 2015 WINE RAFFLE

This year, with the hope of making our biggest fundraiser, the 6th Annual FFN Wine Raffle, the best yet, we are appealing to YOU, our members, to donate your favourite bottle(s) of red or white store-bought wine. At this point, we are only one-third of the way to collecting enough wine.

Please donate! Donations can be picked up upon request by Holly Roulston or Paul Simpson or dropped off (arranging in advance) to Paul Simpson at 47 Britannia Street, Stratford. All wine donations must be collected by May 2015. If you have any questions, contact Holly at 519.284.2649 or holly.roulston@f55f.com. To arrange for pick-up or drop-off, contact Paul at 519.273.8067 or simpson.paul@wightman.ca.

CAT TOYS FOR CANADA DAY

What do cat toys and Canada Day have in common? Feline Friends Network!! FFN's Education and Community Outreach Committee will be setting up a booth again this year for the Canada Day event in Downtown Stratford.

To add a little twist, we will have a community game along the lines of "Guess the number of jelly beans" – but with cat toys! We are reaching out to the membership between now and the middle of June to donate NEW small cat toys for use in the game.

The winner of the game will receive a prize (still to be determined) and afterwards the cat toys will be donated to local rescues to be provided with the adoptions of cats/kittens. Donations can be dropped off on the front porch of 35 Church St., Stratford (across from the library's back parking lot). Thank you in advance for your donations! This is sure to be a great day of education and fun!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

CAT CARRIERS

While FFN has a small collection of cat carriers, with our expanded Low Cost for Low Income program and vet visits for friendly strays and barn cats, we could definitely use more. If you have any carriers that you are no longer using and could donate to us, we would be MOST GRATEFUL! Hard-sided carriers are best because some cats are ingenious escape artists!

SPONSORS

FFN needs sponsors for special events, such as the Feline Film Festival or Catapawlooza. Sponsoring businesses have their logos appear on all promotional materials, as well as on a special "Thank You" board at the event. If you or someone you know owns a business and would like to help the success of these events, give us a call!

If you're interested in helping with either of these requests, please email FFN at info@felinefriends.ca or call the FFN cell phone at 519.301.5735.

Upscale yardsale raises \$1500+

by Patricia Burnell

What a success, oh what a success, a 'purrificatious' success

You came and you went

On purchasing bent

Your kindness has lent

Much money to be sent

To those puddies not meant

To further 'invent'

More puddies to add to the crazy and mad kitten season
and puddie growth mess!

The Upscale yardsale netted over \$1500 with a few boxes left to donate to our friends at EVAH for their yardsale fundraiser. Some of the finer objects will be saved and sold at a later date. It just goes to show that Feline Friends members don't just talk the talk, they walk the walk – THANK YOU!

